

3 June 96

M.W. - arrived site - 8.30 no one there so went and had coffee near the loney with Soph. Ash and rest of team arrived around 10.00. Began setting out grid using triangulation from last years grid. Much deliberation about best trench size. Initial confusion as five people with different ideas concerning final decision on trench size attempt to set out grid. Then everyone leaves and Ash and I start again.

Terrible terrible weather. Rain sets in around midday - everyone soaked to the skin - as usual waterproofs appear reluctantly + too late. Ash soldiers on. After several stops and starts we lay out 3 sides of the grid

5 x 6 - decide to leave one side in order to remove stones without damaging site - Tomorrow I REMEMBER TO DO CO-ORDINATES, + TRANSFER T.B.M.

[This is Ash's writing]

The increasingly bad weather created problems in laying out the grid with sufficient accuracy - wind blowing tapes etc. I'm somewhat bemused by the standard method of laying out the 1m grid markers within the 6x5m rectangle - it seems to be unnecessarily repetitive, & to aim to achieve (in some ways) spurious accuracy. My assumption is that the most important aspect is to tie this year's excavation accurately into last year's, while providing a set of grid points that the totally inexperienced students will find relatively easy to use, & that look acceptable/professional to the luminaries from the Prehistoric Society who are due to visit next Sunday - after all, they are the Site Directors' peer group and have funded some of this year, & are hoped to fund subsequent years too. Having got to the stage of suffering initial stages of exposure today, I believe we have achieved a grid that ~~will~~ ^{deliberate change!} should achieve the above aims.

(I was entertained that, on one of her visits to us in the wind & rain, I saw Sue trip over one of our carefully placed nails, frown at it, then put it back where it was. Yes, we did later

confirm that it was still in exactly the right place - & by "exactly" I mean within 3mm.)

On the way back to the cars I was somewhat bemused by the positioning of the flags along the "stone row" - not all of them seem to be at positions where stones are visible, & not all visible stones are flagged - so what implicit/explicit interpretation was being applied to these features in the landscape to enable these flags to be positioned is currently unknown. It's currently 9.47 pm, so I'm not going to ask tonight. No doubt we will all find out at sometime.

I'm very disappointed that the time involved in setting out the grid meant that I did not have time to visit either of the settlement hut excavation sites today. I'm also worried by the extent to which the landscape is being polluted by wood chippings ^{very slow to degrade} (even though we all picked up little bits of dropped cheese & bread etc. ^{very rapid to degrade} after lunch); perhaps this too will be resolved tomorrow.

[Note added following day: I was wrong - the wood chippings had already been tidied up & removed from the landscape]

DAY 2 - 4th JUNE 96

HW - Morning: Much better weather. On arrival at site discovered that our carefully laid out grid pegs had been uprooted and trampled by cattle. So had to re-lay the grid again. Ash got on with this task while I wrote the co-ordinates on the pegs. Decided to ~~have~~ have an L-shaped trench (watch out Lynn Banks-Reid!) This will allow the stones to be rolled out of the trench onto the turf. However, Sue would like a pollen sample from the section beneath the southern stone so the trench is extended here to its most westerly (site westerly!) edge.

Afternoon deturked with Pippa, Matt and Crystal. Matt is ^{an} extremely proficient deturker and very fast - apparently his brother's are landscape gardeners! - so we got the job done a mere quickly than expected (for once). Began clearing back by shovel-scraping but it became obvious that at this level where

the visibility of features was so poor this was not the best method so decided to travel the areas of site not occupied by ~~last year's~~ the backfill of last year's trench. (Momentarily made the "classic error" by being distracted with a "feature" in last year's backfill - it's so easy to ~~be~~ get carried away ~~and~~ with the excitement of something ^{in the microscale} new! that ~~was~~ it's easy to lose sight of the elementary conditions of the macroscale (that sounds awfully pompous!!)).

I had tried to encourage the deturkers to take as small a ~~slice~~ size of ~~grass~~ soil as was reasonable for regeneration. ~~This meant that a~~ because I was worried about possible damage to the site. This meant that there was now a lot of root matter on the surface and I began to despair of seeing anything. Fortunately Pippa picked out the edge.

of a dark brownish black feature ~~under~~ which went under one of the stones. ~~The~~ Parts of this feature were masked by a mat of roots which I think we shall have to remove.

Because I am used to sites with an amount of overburden or ploughing damage I find it easy to forget how close to the surface archaeological deposits survive here. Things began to look up after Pippa's "hind" and I dropped my inclination to mattock off the rooty peat matter - instead it seems better to remove it by hand in order to avoid damaging anything sensitive below.

Something very interesting appears to be happening with Stone (15). This stone has a hollow under it so that it is possible to slide your hand actually under the stone into the space beneath which has presumably been vacant ever since it was demolished.

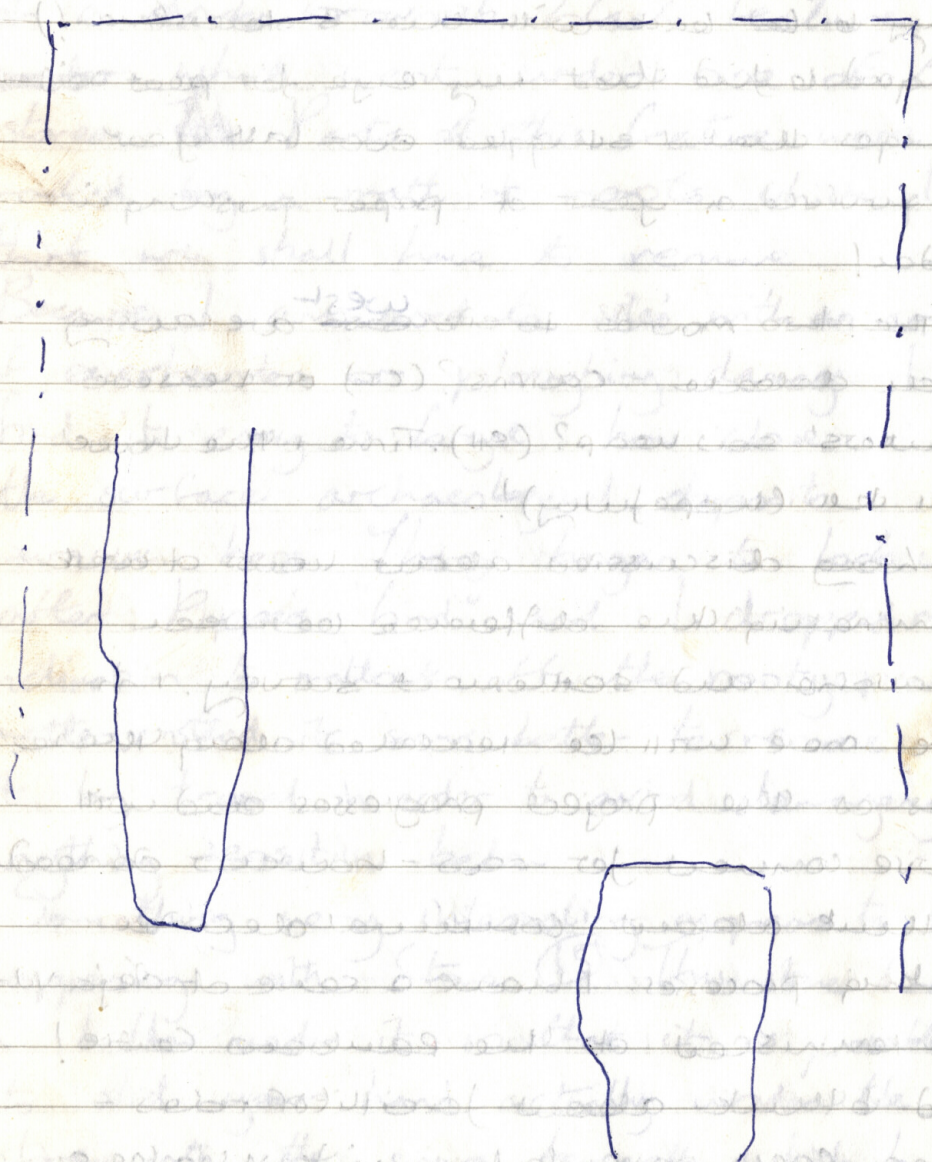
A beautiful day resulting in much sunbath! Lovely to be back with the 3 stores (man!) and good to find that my eye for peat soil changes that I struggled over last year has survived a year of paper pushing in London!

The two mounds to site ~~east~~^{west} are causing much debate - cairns? (CT) or treasure hunters' soil heap? (SH). Time + the shovel will tell (hopefully)!

Long discussion about hours of work illuminating the difference between excavation and settlement survey. I'm sure more will be revealed along these lines as the project progresses and will reserve comment for now - however do need to think about continual decision making processes. I have a sense of déjà vu - very reminiscent of the Rainbow Centre! Need to think about facilitator roles - perhaps each person taking it turns to be a facilitator.

(Pippa)

DAYS. SKETCH PLAN



5th June
96

PIPPA WARRING: HELEN

DAY 3

ANDREW

MATT

PIPPA.

Helen + Pippa arrived early to find cattle had straddled the fence, grid pegs uprooted, site trampled + turf pile redistributed, not to mention dung encircling the spoil heap! Helen started clearing + Pippa wrote in site diary - P started clearing + everyone arrived! Matt + Andrew started clearing backfill of last year's ditch. Helen decided size / shape of ditch was a BAD IDEA, after discussion with Sue extended it 0.5m ^{Site north} ~~east~~ side (am). ~~the~~ New extension + west side cleared back + after lunch site south extended 0.5m. Pippa tapping with mound edges + features in east west side. whole day

revolved around trying to resolve these edges + features - should we section across + whack it all out? (male view? - Barbara's gender division)

What happened! (H.W.) Debated possible relationships between two mounds at W end one of which appears to overlie the large western mound. I tentatively suggested to Chris G. that perhaps we ought to section across both mounds. Chris G. said "yes, well that's what I would do" (a bit guiltily). Barbara later suggested that the "whack it out" approach was a male view of excavation, whereas ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~more~~ ^{more} females ~~as~~ take a more cautious ~~evening~~ approach. Matt tends to agree that ~~men~~ men are generally more bullish and cavalier.

Andy "I abstain - I have only worked on sites with one ~~man~~ or two females."

Pippa; "Maybe it's more of a yin-yang characteristic than gendered." H.W.; "I've worked with female excavators who are just as cavalier in their attitude as men - some of them more so!"

Then: we extended the trench again to the south 0.5 m + laid out strings to extend ~~to~~ to the north 0.5 m tomorrow. Matt found it - what is it? A possibly "inverted pyramid shaped stone" (Matt) or "a ~~inverted~~ flat slab with inverted crenation on underneath + a 'new' pillar on next to it" (Helen). Once uncovered the stone was more modest than these expectations + emerged as a granite slab - possible stone row slab? Situated on ~~top~~ ^{side} of site southern mound.

To do tomorrow:

- ① reset grid
- ② transfer TBM
- ③ extend site to north
- ④ clear up + photograph.
- ⑤ plan
- ⑥ start excavating!!!!

Andrew -

last comment! - 'Probably!' A good day, with a great team - atmosphere on site was ideal.

DAY 4.

6th JUNE 96

ANDREW WRITING FOR: HELEN

PIPPA

ANDREW

MARYLYN

AND JASON - He late ^{arrival} ← MATT - not here because he is deturfing in lot 23.

Helen arrived early, and noticed the cattle had been in again.

stone, Helen began deturfing to the north. Trench now at full size. Andrew, Pippa & Matt arrived, and helped!! Andrew & Matt deturfed with Helen, while Pippa straightened out the grid.

After the deturfing was finished (very quickly - Pippa still on the grid!) Jason arrived - good timing - and we all started cleaning up the site for the pre-excavation photo (except Pippa!). - (Passing string on to Marylyn - Helen and Andrew go off to photo site).

Pippa continued replacing the grid pegs and the rest of us cleaned up the trench. Sue, Helen & Chris G. took the pollen samples in the tube which caused great excitement. There was a slight problem with keeping the levels in context but Helen managed very well. Chris G. & Sue photographed and planned the pollen sample tubes in context. Day concluded with general site photographs being taken by Andrew, Helen, Sue & Chris G.

Marylyn Maynard

6/6/96

Another wonderful day - beautiful sunshine
and a wicked beam! Though it
became difficult to sledge hammer
the grid pegs in straight with
Helen's Christmas carols deteriorating
into a general rendition of everybody's
favourite golden oldies - the songs we
love to hate, though the line was
finally drawn when Matt started
singing the "birdie song"!

Pippa

Helen, I've used one frame
on your site's camera -
the last. It's not been booked

DAY 5

Day off!

DAY 6

8th JUNE '96

Pippa writing for Matt

Pippa

Helen celebrating exam results
so Matt + I remained on the
bench alone. Very quiet
peaceful day - Matt cleared
back the first line which
I'd cosmetically "cleaned" for the
photo the day before (I
didn't spend the whole day
~~the~~ straightening + replacing
the grid!). I planned. Sue
came down + helped me
set up the level - a very time
consuming process! - and we
levelled in the plan. Chris G
joined us and after much
standing around and scratching
of heads we formulated a
plan to shift the east stone.

Chris ~~took over~~ ~~then~~ ~~was~~ ~~using~~
four posts to dig out
the soil from underneath the 2
ends of the store and this
and other loose was
shovelled into ~~area~~ last year's
"stone setting". Turf was laid
on top to the bench edge and
Chris + I levered up the
store using two force posts -
Matt heaved from the other
side! Surprisingly easily the
store flipped over onto the
turf. With slightly more
difficulty (the turfs underneath
got in the way of the posts)
we levered it over again
straight onto the bench edge.
A surprisingly straightforward and
easy job, giving more hope to
the idea of moving the other
two stores. Great elation all
round!

DAY 7 9th JUNE '96

* During this time the 1st gr
of visitors passed
through - a group of
school children +
teacher I explained
the site to.

Pippa writing for Pippa
matt

The day of the visitors! (in several different herds) Matt and I on site again with Sue popping down. The morning was spent with Matt continuing to take off the top turf soil whilst I completed the excavation of the "stone setting" now the eastern stone had been removed. I just finished as the prehistoric society approached (we'd had an 3 minute warning as the group appeared over the horizon), and they all gathered around the ditch. We had tea whilst Chris T welcomed them and

Sue talked about the excavation. In high winds I managed to isolate the correct piece of permalace + stick it on to the right planning board (there are 2 sets of board - the one's marked as Sue's are 2mm larger squares than the others!?). Just started planning the western ~~here~~ end of the bench before a section is opened (decision by Sue + Chris G in Helen's absence). When a 3rd group approached the bench. Explained the bench to them whilst their 'leader' marched off to find Chris T.

Finally got back to the planning; tapes flapping everywhere! Matt finished howelled + he left for unit 23. Sue returned + helped with

tapes + we discussed the interrelationship between the southern mound and the black feature at the east end of the long store. We eventually decided that the black soil was the fill of a cut which had 'exploded' over the edges of the cut. Where the mound + this feature meet it would appear over-bowelling has occurred and removed a couple of cms of black fill soil from the (at this point) gently sloping sides of the cut, slightly confusing things at first sight. It would appear that the black filled feature is cut into the mound. ~~is~~ later than the mound. Sectioning this area will clarify things - it was "all is lost"!

Rain came along + as the survey team had already left, site was quickly evacuated.

Altogether an interesting day with added frustration. Good to have visitors - so much archaeology is now 'hands off', it's ^a nice ^{change} to be able to talk to people about what you're doing. However, so many groups, all fairly large, and high winds led to not much being done on site and a sense of frustration all round. As far as I personally feel, this is no bad sacrifice to make once in a while to try + redress the balance, putting archaeology back in the public area. All the groups ^{today} were archaeological societies - it would

be nice, though hard work, to incorporate local people, particularly children, perhaps through schools.

Day 8 10th June.

Insite = H.W., Gary, Ash (Berry).

Ash will from henceforth be known as Berry due to his resemblance to a member of ABBA.

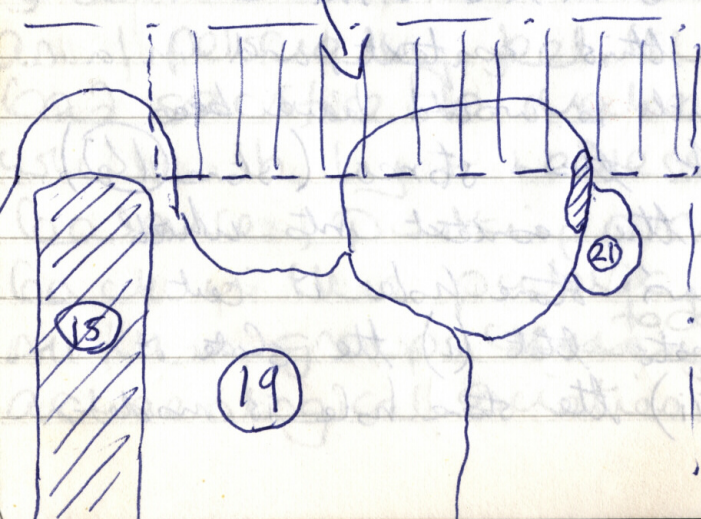
Gary and I took down remaining part of pea gravel in last year's trench while Berry ~~planned~~ completed pre-ex plan. When we were mottocking off this material I uncovered a piece of slate 0.05m x 0.07m well embedded in this context, and in a position which ~~a~~ would have been under one of the stones (stone (14)). Since this is the context into which the last year's stone hole is cut ~~as~~ this suggests that (i) the slate is not modern (ii) the stone hole is modern.

I think it's more likely that the slate is not modern.

We decided to remove context (18) (black silty layer) Gary, Berry + I started but discovered that it appeared to go under another layer. These layers = dark brown gravelly layer; (19) mottled orange and black layer with charcoal (21).

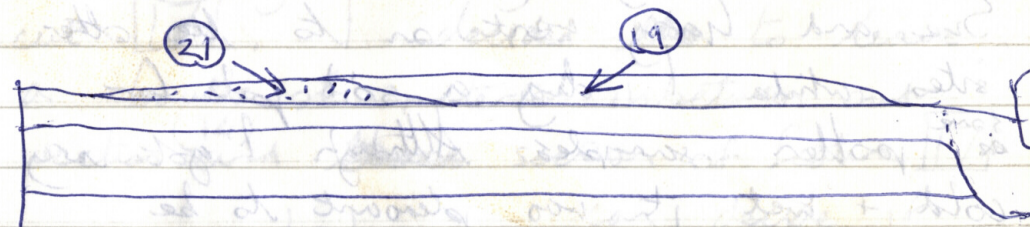
Important to sample context (21) for charcoal identification/dating.

After discussion with Sue and Chris ~~it was~~ a section was opened in the north-east corner of the excavated area site.



Each context was removed layer by layer leaving some

material in the section.



DAY 9 June 11th

Rained and rained - the "55" (the settlement survey team) took the day off we sat in a cafe in Camelford and discussed the state of the site, relations with the "55" and their limitations. Began to feel very nervous at rate of progress on stone row. There is a process of familiarisation it is necessary to go through with any site I feel this stage is over with now and we are ready to "get in there". I worry about whether I have been "too kind" with the excavators - Mike seems to be much stricter.

In the afternoon we went up to site

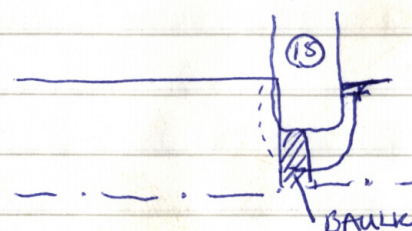
in the pouring rain. Mike, Ash, Chris Sue and Gary went on to the other sites while I dug a soil pit for ^{some} pollen samples. Although I got very cold + wet it was pleasant to be working alone and not to have to interact in any way - just get on with the job. It really wasn't possible to do anything else that day so returned to base.

DAY 10 June 12th

Gary has been bagged by the hut digging team - his singing talents will be sorely missed. Ash + I removed remaining material in section and cleared up for a photo. Sections look good. Benny + I drew ~~the~~ section 13 section 14 must be done tomorrow.

DAY 11 June 13th

Keora began taking out the fill of cut [17]. I decided ~~to~~ to leave a bank of material in between our section ⁽¹⁴⁾ and ~~the~~ section of feature [17]



can decide if this is worth drawing or not later.

DAY 12 June 14th

Day off, I went to see Kate, Ash Chris G. and Sue on site.

(Camilla writing)

DAY June 15th

On site - Ben, Marion, Charlie, Camilla, Helen.
- 2 shovels, a hatchet, and various other pieces of equipment found to be missing, presumed stolen. Helen & Ben were on site at 9:00, mattoching ^{& clearing} a section of the Southern Mound. Eugene also arrived, & was forced to travel ~~to the~~ by slawmester Helen for about 5:00 hrs, so that the sun-dried surface was removed, to give Helen a better idea of what was going on underneath. Helen began to ~~excavate~~ travel out the fill of cut [17]. Meanwhile, I cleaned up the sections that Helen & Ben had previously mattoched out. Charlie & Ben finished travelling & planned a redeposited clump of ^{the} material on top of the Southern mound. Helen photographed the sections cleaned up, & Marion continued digging cut [17] & found something really exciting. ! !

WATCH THIS SPACE.

Ben went home, & Charlie replanned the smaller stone to ^{the} left of stone (15).

In section 15 it was clear that the dump of redeposited material overlay ~~the~~ a black silty layer similar to that within section 13.1

Think this probably a buried turf layer - beneath this layer are the layers of the normal soil horizon.

The stones in the fill at cut [17] are a bit of a mystery - won't know till we dig it.

June 16th

HW - now HJW to avoid confusion with MH.

On site - ~~Ben, John, Charlie and Marian~~

On site - Ben, Charlie, Marian, Kiera.

June 17th

On site - Joe, Sue, Charlie, Kiera + H.W.

Began the day by defining several contexts for Jane to plan - What a relief to get someone on site who doesn't need teaching to plan! Now we can really crack on.

Jane planned context 23 then ^{Charlie} ~~then~~ and Kiera dug it (partially). Sue continued to remove the fills of [17].

Meanwhile Kiera and I found the edge of context (7) - the fill of last years "animal scutt hollow" which can now be seen as ~~an~~ peaty spread within a depression much bigger depression. Jane drew section ~~at~~ showing (18), (30), (29) and then planned (7) with no fuss (Hurray).

Jane and I then removed (7). At the east end of (15) ~~at~~ we came down onto a silty block material which appeared to be the fill of another feature. The edges

of this context were very difficult to see and we cleared quite a bit before we were certain of its extent.

What actually happened was; - as we were rathocking we came upon this material, unsure as to whether it was the lower parts of context (7) or another feature I decided to string a section across, just in case, and excavate. Sure enough this proved to be a feature. As it is in line with [17] and last years stone hole it maybe another socket - the third hole for the remaining stone.

Still no ~~more~~ more enlightened on the "purpose" of the stone arrangement in [17] however ~~the~~ after Jane's section we can say that (i) it appears to be sitting on a some sort of inwash material or ~~was~~ "underlain deposit" context (29) (ii) it is overlain by (18)

The stones seem too insubstantial for

a packing arrangement, the other competing interpretations are

a) they represent a ramp for erecting the stone

b) they are the result of in situ granite working.

In the afternoon we moved stone (13) - this took about 3 mins after at least 20 mins deliberation concerning the best way to do it.

June 18th

Jane, Charlie, Helen, Sue + Céire (me) on site; Jan drawing.

This morning, Jane took out 31, the fill of 32 whilst Sue tried to find the edge of 17.

This afternoon we moved stone 22. Sue and Céire drew a section

~~of~~ a box section of the turf line underneath the stone (14).

Helen dug a pit for the base of stone 15 to go in.

Jane removed (matched) (26). Céire and Sue took 3 pollen samples from the box section of the turf line underneath stone 14.

For me, today has probably been one of the best (workwise) days so far - despite all the midgies. It was nice to do something different like section drawing + pollen sampling - I felt I was actually learning something!

M.W. - Jane, Sue and I spent a confusing morning trying to understand what was happening with [17] and [32]. Both features are rather irregular, [32] in particular. [32] also has large granite blocks ~~such as~~ (packing stones?) strewn about it, in some cases these have been compressed into the edge of the feature. This fill seems to have been much disturbed

by later activity - probably that
involving the removal of the stone (14).

Mike's idea that the mounds represent
material spoil resulting from excavation
around the stones may well be right.

I'm also beginning to wonder whether the

LESKERNEX
STONE ROW (96)

LSR 96